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Summary

About this Release

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The aim of a repeated survey is to allow one or more items to be monitored across time. For survey design purposes this aim has often been simplified to two objectives: good estimates of the item for each period, and good estimates of period to period change. In the Australian Labour Force Survey (LFS) these objectives lead to a design with high overlap between successive monthly samples.

Focusing on good estimates of the "underlying trend" of the series, and how it changes over time, could lead to quite different survey designs. Previous work suggests that a sample rotation pattern with no month to month overlap would provide better trend estimates. Unfortunately such a rotation pattern gives poor estimates of month to month change.

This paper considers an alternative estimator, the linear composite estimator, in combination with various sample rotation patterns. A rotation pattern is presented in which individuals are sampled for two successive months out of every four months, giving a 50 percent overlap of sample between successive months. By using composite estimation this rotation pattern yields improved estimates of trend while maintaining good estimates of month to month change.

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